

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A pneumatic tire in which a tread surface thereof is divided into a central land portion between inner longitudinal grooves, intermediate land portions between the inner and outer longitudinal grooves, and shoulder land portions axially outside the outer longitudinal grooves, by being provided with the inner longitudinal grooves extending on both sides of a tire equator in a circumferential direction of the tire and the outer longitudinal grooves extending on both sides thereof in the circumferential direction of the tire, wherein the central land portion and the intermediate land portions are formed into circumferential ribs which continuously extend in the circumferential direction of the tire, and on each of the shoulder land portions, blocks divided by lug grooves are arranged as a block row in the circumferential direction of the tire,

each the intermediate land portion includes inclined grooves extending outward in the axial direction of the tire from an inner end away from ~~of~~ the inner longitudinal groove by grooves away from a small distance  $La$  to an outer end which intersects with the outer longitudinal grooves while increasing an angle  $\theta$  with respect to the circumferential direction of the tire, the angle  $\theta$  in the inner end is 0 to  $25^\circ$  and the angle  $\theta$  in the outer end is  $60$  to  $80^\circ$ ,

a pitch  $P1$  between the inclined grooves in the circumferential direction of the tire is greater than a pitch  $P2$  between the lug grooves in the circumferential direction of the tire,

the lug grooves each being provided with a groove volume reducing portion in the vicinity of an intersecting portion between the lug grooves and the outer longitudinal grooves, each groove volume reducing portion reducing a groove volume of each lug groove, each groove volume reducing portion being a tie-rod which protrudes from a groove bottom of each lug groove.

2. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the outer end of the inclined grooves includes a chamfered portion from which a corner portion where an axially outer groove wall of the inclined grooves and an axially inner groove wall of the outer longitudinal grooves intersect with each other is removed.

3. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, ~~1 or 2~~, wherein an axially inner the groove wall of each the outer longitudinal groove grooves inside the axial direction of the tire is inclined at an angle  $\alpha$  relative to a circumferential direction of the tire, outside in the axial direction of the tire rearwardly in the tire rotation direction between the lug grooves which are adjacent to each other in the circumferential direction of the tire.

4. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to ~~claim 3, any one of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein an axially outer the groove wall of each the outer longitudinal groove grooves outside the axial direction of the tire is inclined at an angle  $\beta$  relative to a circumferential direction of the tire, outside the axial direction of the tire rearwardly in the tire rotation direction between the lug grooves which are adjacent to each other in the circumferential direction of the tire.

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to ~~claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 5~~, wherein a width of the lug grooves is reduced outward in the axial direction of the tire.

7. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to ~~claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 6~~, wherein a width  $W_i$  of the inner longitudinal grooves is 1.1 to 1.5 times a width  $W_o$  of the outer longitudinal grooves.

8. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein a width Wy of the inclined grooves is smaller than a width Wo of the outer longitudinal grooves.

9. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 8, wherein the width Wy of the inclined grooves is 40 to 60% of the width Wo of the outer longitudinal grooves.

10. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the small distance La is 3 to 10 mm.

11. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein a width Ki of the central land portion is 5 to 20% of a tread-ground contact width TW.

12. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein a width Km of the intermediate land portion is 10 to 20% of a tread-ground contact width TW and is greater than the width Ki of the central land portion.

13. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein a width Ko of the shoulder land portion is 10 to 30% of a tread-ground contact width TW and is greater than the width Km of the intermediate land portion.

14. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 4, any one of claims 1 to 13, wherein the angles  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are 1 to 6°.

15. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 14, wherein the angle  $\alpha$  and the angle  $\beta$  are equal to each other.

16. (currently amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, any one of claims 1 to 15, wherein a straight distance L1 between the inner end and the outer end of the inclined grooves 9 is 20 to 40% of a tread-ground contact width TW.

17. (canceled)

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.